DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 233 304 CS 007 194

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TITLE Collaboration for School Improvement: A Case Study of a School District and College Implementing Change. Occasional Paper No. 3.
INSTITUTION National College of Education, Evanston, IL. Reading Center.
PUB DATE May 83
NOTE 38p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Administrator Role; *Basic Skills; Change Strategies; *College School Cooperation; Curriculum Development; Educational Research; Elementary Education; *Faculty Development; Higher Education; Inservice Teacher Education; *Leadership Training; Mathematics Instruction; Principals; Program Descriptions; Program Evaluation; *Program Implementation; Reading Instruction; Teacher Effectiveness; Writing Instruction

ABSTRACT

Concerned about the quality of its mathematics and language programs, an elementary school district worked with a college committed to in-school research to create an instructional leadership training program for district principals and teachers. Completing onehalf of its 4-year-project, the Basic Skills Program devoted its first year to writing and its second to reading development. Each summer, a 2-week institute presenting current research and modeling effective strategies was held for principals and selected teachers. During the school year principals and teachers were encouraged in regular meetings and workshops to implement discussed improvements. Evaluations at the end of the second year indicated the project was a success. Tests revealed significant increases in participants' knowledge of writing and reading. Teachers in four of five project schools reported considerable growth in their principals' effectiveness. Interviews, questionnaires, and direct observation all showed high use of project ideas and strategies in the classroom. While student achievement was difficult to measure, educators' enthusiasm was indicated in the project's expansion into additional school districts. (MM)

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COLLABORATION FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT: A CASE STUDY OF A SCHOOL DISTRICT AND COLLEGE IMPLEMENTING CHANGE

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May 1983

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NATIONAL COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

COLLABORATION FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT:

A CASE STUDY

OF A SCHOOL DISTRICT AND COLLEGE

IMPLEMENTING CHANGE

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INTRODUCTION

This article is the report of a collaborative effort between college faculty and principals and teachers from an elementary school district that led to the creation of a leadership training program in writing and reading. As a result of our joint efforts principals and teachers learned about the important current research in writing and reading and were supported in translating that knowledge into school practices. In addition, we were able to design, pilot and refine a leadership training model that can be used in other curricular areas for staff development.

Written from the perspective of one of the faculty members involved throughout the project this article is addressed to both school district leaders and faculty members in colleges and universities. We want to challenge both groups to initiate more such joint efforts. Our experiences convince us that the gap between theory and application can be bridged. By presenting a concrete example of the kind of collaboration possible between a college and a small school district we hope to encourage more such efforts. We have included both description of the project, from inception through the second year evaluation process, and examples of what we are learning.

Our initial interest in developing the project came from reading the research on effective schools and the change process. We know that one of the most consistent characteristics of effective schools is the principal who functions as an instructional leader. (Brookover (1979), Weber (1971), Rutter (1979), Kean (1979), and Sweeney (1982). Principals set the tone for the school. They are the key change facilitators. They support, encourage and evaluate teaching efforts. They monitor achievement and establish goals. Yet few programs are available to help principals develop their instructional leadership and most feel lacking in knowledge of basic curriculum areas. Our own experience confirmed the importance of school leadership and the real need to translate sound theory into practice in the schools. Therefore, we decided to try to combine our interests in

translating to practioners current research in the basic skills with the need to develop instructional leadership training programs for the schools.

We wanted to know if we could develop a model that would effectively:

* increase principals' and teachers' knowledge of learning processes
* expand principals' instructional leadership
* change teaching practices
* improve the working climate of the schools
* increase students' achievement

In addition to these specific goals we also wanted to explore with teachers and principals a host of other questions about the leadership development process, about the evaluation instruments we were piloting, and about the teaching of writing and reading in this school district.

BACKGROUND

Our project was made possible by the complimentary interests of National College faculty and a small, local school district. The superintendent of the Zion Schools recognized a need to develop the instructional leadership of his principals, two of whom had never taught in the elementary schools. (one had secondary science, the other history .....) His interest was heightened because the role of curriculum supervisor had been eliminated from the budget and he wanted to increase the principals' responsibility for curriculum and instruction. In addition, the district had not had a focused program of staff development for a few years and this need was high on the district's list of priorities.

The district, located between Chicago and Milwaukee, Wisconsin, is basically a stable small town community that has in recent years been experiencing more short term transient population. About one third of the students who attend the schools now are classified as minority and 25% come from low income families. Four of the five elementary schools have Title I programs in reading. They have an ongoing need to reexamine their curriculum. Just 5 years earlier, the district recognized it was

not experiencing high achievement in reading and had instituted a new reading program using Lippincot for primary grades and Houghton Mifflin in the intermediate. They continue to be concerned that they meet the needs of all their students.

From an initial needs assessment of student achievement and of principals' interest in additional training writing came in as the highest priority, followed by reading, math and oral language. None of the schools had contemplated or initiated a writing development project to enhance their curriculum. No principal had any professional preparation in this area. They had little formal training in the teaching of reading. But they were interested in learning.

National College of Education is a small, private single-purpose institution with a long tradition of involvement in the schools. Our faculty are particularly interested in bridging theory to practice and are oriented toward school-based research. Among those interested in this project, Dr. Trafton was already developing and conducting research on a Title I Math project in Georgia. Dr. Ogle had just completed a cooperative project with a Skokie district, developing and coordinating their reading curriculum across the grades. B.J. Wagner was co-directing the Chicago Area Writing Project, an outgrowth of the Bay Area Writing Project that trains teachers in the writing process and then makes them in-service leaders for their own school buildings.

Our reading faculty had also begun to look seriously at the change process efforts coming out of the research community. Three of us had attended a symposium on school-based research at the University of Texas during December of 1979. There we heard Jane Stallings who challenged us with her research on developing effective teaching practices in secondary classrooms and explained her Secondary Observation Instrument (SOI) and its use. We were very interested in the work of the Texas Concerns Based Adoption Model (CBAM) project under Gene Hall and Susan Louche, and found especially helpful their model for the change process that can be monitored over time. Kean's study, WHAT WORKS IN READING, had just been published, underscoring again the importance of the principal's leadership.

The Basic Skills Request for Proposals came from the Office of Education just at the right time for us -- two principals' groups had recently sought us out asking for some form of administrative staff-development in reading and writing; we wanted to explore further some of the research ideas being developed to help change school practices; and the Zion schools were interested in a joint project. So we wrote and were funded for our project in leadership development, which began in the summer of 1980. Donna Ogle would serve as project director and B.J. Wagner would be the first skills area coordinator.

DESIGNING THE PROJECT

Our basic vision for the project was to create a setting in which teams of principals and teachers would learn together about the latest research findings in writing and reading pertinent to school practitioners and then would be assisted in implementing changes consistent with those findings in their schools. As we created this model for leadership development we were aware from our own work in schools and from the current research on the change process that we would need to include a series of experiences that would both allow ample time for change to occur and that would provide the additional support personnel needed to facilitate those changes.

The four year time frame of the Basic Skills Project seemed ideal for our intent. We would be able to establish a good working relationship with both administrators and teachers during the initial phase of the project and build with them toward the fulfillment of our shared goals. The principals would stay with the project for its duration, but different teachers would be involved each year, depending on their strength in the designated area and their role as leaders in the school. By the end of the four years there would be both a common theoretical and instructional base across the district in the Basic Skills area and a strong cadre of leadership personnel for each area within all the schools. Principals would have built a strong background of knowledge and practice in instruction and would have had opportunities to expand their repertoire of instructional leadership behaviors.

As we considered ways to implement our goals, we decided on a process that would be repeated on a yearly basis for each skill area. One skill would be addressed each year, the other determined by the needs assessment made at the onset of the project. By the end of the four years all of the areas included in the Basic Skills Legislation would be addressed; writing, reading, oral language and math. The yearly cycle was divided into two parts; planning and implementation. During the planning phase each principal would be interviewed so the project team would have a clear idea of specific interests and concerns for each building, and so the principals would also be better informed about the orientation of the theoretical aspects. The principals would then select the 3 teachers from their buildings they wanted to join them on the Project for that year; these teachers should be leaders or potential leaders in that skill area. They would continue the process of implementing the project goals throughout the building in subsequent years. Based on the input from the principals and other data from the schools, the summer Institute would be planned by the Skills Coordinator, a faculty member expert in the particular area of focus.

Implementation was divided into two phases, one during the summer and the other during the school year. The focus for the summer Institute would be on the presentation of current research and theory. Teaching practices that are suggested by that research would be intorduced and modeled. This Institute would be conducted over a two-week span, four hours each day. During the first day, just the principals would meet to discuss more fully with us the process and ways we could work with them in building leadership teams. During the rest of the Institute both teachers and principals would learn together. Because the latest research in each field would be presented, all participants would be on a nearly equal basis.

The school year phase was designed as the time to implement the suggestion for teaching made during the Institute and to provide opportunities for principals to expand their instructional leadership behaviors. It included three major elements for district participants: monthly in-service workshops, weekly contacts with the Project Intern, and periodic principal meetings with the Project Director. As incentives for

all participants we decided that 2 hours of college credit would be given to all those who successfully completed the project for their work in the summer Institute and their application efforts. In addition, during the school year all workshops would be held during release time, with substitutes hired for teachers.

The workshops were designed to focus on applications of concepts introduced in the summer Institute. They would help participants with group problem-solving of difficulties in translating ideas into particular settings and promoting sharing of good and helpful teaching ideas. Led by the skills area expert, we expected all participating teachers to attend these workshops and use them to support their change attempts. (As it turned out, sharing became one of our major objectives, since there was such a reluctance to openly talk about successful teaching practices!)

Periodic meetings between the principal and project director would focus on the expansion of their instructional leadership. In the initial proposal two particular objectives are mentioned: improvement of observational skills and development of an in-service strategy to expand the project ideas to the other teachers in each building. This in-service would be conducted by the school administrator and teachers, rather than by college personnel. Each year these two objectives plus additional concerns would be discussed. The college faculty were interested in exploring with the administrators their perceptions of their own instructional leadership roles and their interest in expanding those roles. The teacher assessment of Writing/Reading Programs would also be used to test its value to principals by providing data on teachers perceptions of the school programs.

Thus the model provided for summer learning of new content and theory, a group process for application and support during that change process, meetings for administrators dealing with applications of their leadership to the particular skill area being developed, and one-to-one weekly meetings between teachers, principals and the intern. We also established a regular structure of Friday morning meetings for the college team --so there would be regular communication exchange and support.

PROJECT DESIGN

PLANNING PHASE

Determine target areas through needs assessment (Project Director)

Interview principals individually (Project Director)

Select teacher participants (Principals)

Develop Summer Institute (Skill Area Coordinator)

IMPLEMENTATION PHASE

Summer

Pre-test participants' knowledge base (Skill Area Coordinator)

↓

Conduct 10-day Summer Institute (Skill Area Coordinator)

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School Year

Administer Teacher Assessment of Writing Program, Teacher Assessment of Reading Program, Level of Concern Questionaire (Skill Area Coordinator and Project Director)

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Provide weekly intern visits to each teacher and school.

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Weekly meetings of Skill Area Coordinator, Intern, and Project Director.

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Monthly in-service workshops developed and conducted by Skill Area Coordinator.

↓

Meetings of principals with Project Director

↓

Evaluate outcomes -- knowledge, LoU, and student measures.

discovering their own feelings about and attitudes toward writing. They also explore the implications of these experiences for their work in classrooms. They become acquainted with a variety of ways to stimulate writing and learn to provide pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing, and sharing experiences for students. In the process they develop more confidence in their own writing so they can write with and model writing for these students.

This process model is supported by a good body of current research on both children's early writing efforts and the development of more mature skills. To introduce our participants to the potential within young children, we found particularly important the work of Don Graves (1978), Lucy Calkins (1980), Glenda Bissex (1980) and Marie Clay (1975). Don Murray's research on the writing process approach and the work of James Britton (1970), Henderson and Beers' work on developmental spelling (1980) and James Moffett (1968) on forms of writing and audiences were used to build more knowledge on the development of writing. Addressing the issue of evaluation we again used the work of Don Graves and Don Murray as well as the specific process of the NAEP, National Assessment of Educational Progress, to evaluate writing holistically.

The structure for the Institute involved participants first in writing and then in learning about this research and practical ways to implement writing. A variety of writing assignments appropriate for different grade levels were modeled. One session dealt with responding to writing through conferences and on paper. The importance of reading papers for content not just mechanics was stressed. Participants were given ideas for how to get students into effective small group work and to engage in peer editing. The issue of grammar and punctuation was addressed and ways to build skills while using real writing activities were demonstrated. During the school year the workshops were designed to provide additional writing ideas. Teachers were asked to apply some of these activities or develop their own, but to have children write regularly (at least once a week was our goal). We wanted them to try peer group work and to conference with students. In addition, we developed a variety of ways to share

The staff for the project would include three people each year from our college. Project Director, a Skills Area Coordinator, and an Intern. The Project Director would remain constant over the term of the project and would oversee the general implementation of each phase. She would also work directly with the administrators in facilitating their instructional leadership development. Each year a different skills area coordinator, a member of our faculty expert in the area of focus, would develop and lead the skills training. The coordinator would also direct the work of the intern. The Project Intern, either an advanced student from the college or someone from the school district who had been through our master's level program in the area of focus, would provide most regular support for teachers by being in each building and working with the teachers weekly. Weekly meetings of the staff would help keep communication lines open and would provide direction for the Intern's work. The Intern would both answer questions teachers and principals might have and discuss project ideas; even more importantly the Intern would support teachers' change efforts in their classrooms. That might involve demonstration teaching, taking part of the class while the teacher tried some new strategy with a small group, providing new materials or appropriate books for a lesson, as well as observing and providing constructive feedback about their attempts. The Intern would also meet regularly, although informally, with each principal to keep communication open between the schools and the college faculty.

BUILDING THE KNOWLEDGE BASE FOR THE PROJECT

It was not difficult for us to determine what content we wanted to include for the writing and reading years. There was an abundence of important new research that we wanted to share! Fitting it into the short time frame we had posed more of a problem.

The theoretical base for the writing Institute comes from the writing process approach of Donald Murray and Jim Gray and the Bay Area Writing Project. In that project and ours, administrators and teachers are asked to write as a way of

writing done by the students.

The theoretical perspective that guided our selection of priorities for reading derives from current research on the interactive nature of the reading process. We understand that readers must actively construct meaning from the information presented by the author. The success of the communication will be affected by the similarities in prior knowledge and experiences of the author and reader and by the strategies the reader has available to achieve his/her purposes. Good readers anticipate and predict what a text is likely to contain, determine the focus of their attention and test what they read against their own knowledge.

This understanding of reading isn't particularly new. However, it certainly hasn't been the theory on which most teaching practices are based. To establish the importance of this theoretical perspective we presented the current research that is adding significantly to this understanding of the active, cognitive processing involved in reading.

Work being done at the Center for the Study of Reading was especially important in establishing the nature of the reading process and how readers comprehend. Anderson's work on prior knowledge and schema activation (1979), Pearson's studies of inferencing and prediction (1979), Tierney's explorations of the author-reader transaction (1980), and A. Brown's work with metacognitive strategies (1982), and anticipation "set" (1977) were compelling evidence. The importance of understanding how readers use structures, both narrative and expository, and the responsibility authors have to write well were underscored by examination of N. Stein's work in story grammar (1979) and Anderson and Armbruster's work with expository text (1980). More applied studies of comprehension instruction by Durkin (1979) and of materials used to teach reading (Durkin, 1981) established the importance of our efforts to build a better understanding of reading.

Research on beginning reading was also included in the Institute and tends to support this view of reading as an active, constructive process. We used the work of the Goodmans (1970), F. Smith (1978), and Durkin (1966)to explain how

children learn to read. The relationships between reading and writing were introduced through the research of Henderson (1981), Clay (1975) and Graves (1978).

We began the summer Institute by examining what skilled readers do when reading and asked participants to take part in some reading experiences using variously contrived texts. After exploring how we read both familiar and unfamiliar content and text types we then explored the learning to read process and again simulated that experience using the Primer for Parents developed by Paul McKee.

After establishing the nature of the reading process we examined the functions reading fulfills and ways principals and teachers could model various uses of reading. The latter part of the Institute was devoted to modeling of and developing participants' expertise with new strategies that would help children become more interactive in their reading. We selected two group teaching strategies we wanted all participating teachers to learn and eventually implement in their classrooms, one for narrative (DR-TA) and one for expository material (K-W-L). The DR-TA (Stauffer, 1969) focuses on children learning to predict what they think will happen in a story based on the information given in the text and their prior knowledge. After predicting, children then read to confirm or alter those predictions. The teacher discusses their predictions and asks for proof from the text of their thinking. Initial predictions come from general clues available in title, picture, or author information and from the nature of the story itself. After reading some of the text and finding out more about the character, setting and conflict readers are able to make much more informed predictions and read intently with clear purpose.

The K-W-L reading to learn process was developed by Ogle to help elementary children learn how to learn from texts. The teacher uses a 3-part worksheet that includes columns for "What We Know", "What We Want to Find Out" and "What we Learned". Through a process of brainstorming children call up all they know about the topic. In this process questions are raised as children disagree and these plus new questions are recorded on the second column. As part of the getting ready to read the teacher may ask students to find general categories of information by charting what they

already know and how to predict how they think the article will be organized. (See example from a giraffe article, Diagram 1). The third column is used after reading to record what was learned and to discuss questions that remain unanswered.

We concluded the Institute with presentation of the research on effective schools and teaching. The Beginning Teacher Evaluation Study data on classrooms where achievement was high and Jane Stallings' research on effective teaching were both presented. Teachers were invited to have a Stallings analysis done of their own classrooms during the school term and principals were encouraged to use the Classroom Snapshot as part of their evaluative processes.

Based on the feedback from teachers and principals during the summer Institute we decided to divide the school year application phase into five different focal areas: the relationship between reading and writing, interactive narrative strategies, reading to learn strategies, classroom organization, and oral reading and motivation. As the year progressed we developed a structure of the monthly in-service sessions that included some sharing of new books and materials with ways to use these (including choral reading, readers theater, and radio reading) followed by a time for sharing of attempts at implementation and "debugging" efforts. Then the content focus with time for reflection at the end of each session would be presented by the Skills Coordinator.

EVALUATION DESIGN

Our initial evaluation design included both formative and summative measures. Because a major goal of the project was the creation of an effective staff development model, we wanted each component of the project evaluated by participants. Appropriate force-choice and open-ended questionaires were developed; we also knew that informal discussion and feedback would be powerful sources of input in determining how adequately our design met the school personnel's needs.

We wanted to measure the impact of the project on principals and teachers knowledge and behaviors, too. Therefore, both at the beginning and end of each

project year we administered three instruments. The first was a test of knowledge that we constructed to parallel the content of our project. The second instrument, The Teacher Assessment of Writing Programs, were used to measure the working climate defined by the relationship of actual program to what teachers considered ideal. The Levels of Use structured interviews, part of the concerns Based Adoption Model (CBAM) (Loucks, Newlove and Hall, 1975) were also conducted with each participant by an outside evaluation to determine to what degree the project innovation was being utilized. Measures of student achievement were also needed. If achievement had been the major target of this project we would have needed more precise measures of those components targeted for application in classrooms. However, time and money limited our attention to this need. Therefore, during the writing year the National Assessment evaluation process was used to evaluate student writing on a pre-post basis. In the second year the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test was used.

During the year three additional measures were used to evaluate out impact. First, the Levels of Concern Questionaire part of the CBAM was administered to monitor teacher concerns and help us plan workshops. Second, the principals, project director, and the Intern observed project teachers to determine the degree to which each implemented what was taught in the project. Both the Intern and Director kept logs of these observations, plus events and discussions they had that were pertinent. Third, principals were trained in using Classroom Snapshot Instrument developed by Jane Stallings for their classroom observations.

IMPLEMENTING THE PROJECT

Working with a small group of principals and teachers made it possible for us to follow the impact of our project in the schools and make needed alterations. We learned again how long it takes to implement innovations and the support that is necessary for change to occur. However, by the end of the two years there were significant changes in the language arts and reading instruction in the Zion schools. Teachers were implementing and adapting strategies they had learned. They were asking more of children and listening to what children contributed in new ways. Principals

were utilizing their knowledge to support teachers and make decisions about their school instructional programs. Some were adapting their leadership behaviors to become more actively involved in the instructional program.

The first year had begun slowly and was an adjustment and learning year. This was due in part to having little advance planning time to work with principals and teachers; our notification of funding came just a few weeks before we needed to conduct the Institute. In addition, we were starting with the area least familiar to the school participants. It became clear during the summer Institute that most of these elementary principals and teachers were not very familiar with the Bay Area Model or the work of Graves and others on beginning writing. Some teachers and principals were surprised by and resistant to our "process model" which asked them to write as writers, and to approach writing through a "process model". We had to find ways during the year to overcome their reservations. We also modified our expectations for the principals component based on our experiences with them. We did establish a good working relationship between the principals, teachers, and college faculty members that led to a much better design and that was translated into a great deal of writing in classrooms.

Participants expressed a wide range of emotions in response to our request that they write. . A few almost refused to attempt writing activities and were unwilling to share their efforts. Others didn't think writing was important and preferred to teach grammar and punctuation as isolated skills. For others the opportunity to grow and develop as writers was a freeing and stimulating experience. It supported and expanded the writing activities a few had already been doing in their classrooms. In reflecting on the Institute some teachers told us it was the first time they had really gotten to know each other; they had gone beneath the superficial level of school interchanges by sharing their personal experiences in writing.

Three factors helped participants become more convinced about the worth of developing elementary children's writing abilities. We gave them concrete examples

of what children could accomplish and of how they could teach writing. We also worked with teachers in their own classrooms to help them adapt the new ideas to their teaching styles and organization. Finally, positive experiences they had with their own attempts or with modeling done by the Intern helped them become increasingly comfortable with writing.

We had not used video-tapes of children involved in school writing projects during the Institute. As soon as we introduced them in the fall in-services we saw their importance to participants. In order to understand the value of the writing process concrete examples were needed of the kinds of teaching we had been talking about and modeling with adults. Many participants did not have background experiences to bring to bear on our imput and so were frustrated. They also wanted more examples of children's writing and what could be expected at different grade levels. As they formed a clearer idea of what the implementation of writing would be participants became more committed to learning and applying ideas.

The intern's regular visits to the classrooms were important to our experimentation efforts in two ways. She modeled demonstration writing lessons for teachers and helped us understand some of the problems that teachers faced as they tried writing activities. From her observations we learned that some of the resistance to writing process activities came from conflicts between teachers' classroom organization and management structures and those modeled in our video-tapes and demonstrations. Small group work and freedom for children to move around the room for conferencing and peer efforts are all assumed in the processes we demonstrated. Some of our teachers did not have classroom structures that encouraged those behaviors. Therefore we helped those teachers modify writing process activities to their classroom rules. We also showed them how to teach children new participation behaviors so that more small group activity would be possible without their loosing control of classroom discipline.

As the year progressed we saw increasing uses of the ideas that were presented during the workshops. Teachers began to bring samples of their children's

writing to the Intern and, with encouragement, some would share their writing assignments and projects at the workshops. They also began to ask for more ways to engage children in writing and wanted assistance in purchasing materials to support their efforts. Principals demonstrated their understanding of the process and its' importance in a variety of ways. These included their willingness to purchase materials, to send teachers to locally-conducted writing workshops, and to publicize efforts to parents. One principal had even established an exchange of letters between himself and a fourth grade class over a school controversy.

The aspect of our original design that needed the most rethinking was our plan to support the development of principals' instructional leadership. We quickly learned that the in-service sessions designed to develop their skills in observing writing lessons and working with teachers were not appropriate in the first year for these principals. It was clear, too, that we would have to wait for the planning of in-service sessions for the remainder of the building faculty until the project was more securely in place. We should have taken more time with the principals initially assessing their general leadership styles and preferred behaviors and then explored with them ways to extend their leadership in instructional areas. We had made some unfortunate assumptions that needed to be revised. However, data from the TAWP had confirmed that there was a good working relationship between the principals and teachers that could be built on. Rather than push our original plan we decided to learn from them and present a variety of suggestions for their own leadership orientation.

The principals recognized the inappropriateness of our assumptions but did seem interested in developing some of skills basic to implementing our objectives. They decided to take a series of administrative workshops that dealt with clinical supervision and leadership styles during the second year of the project. The superintendent and principals asked that our project and this workshop series be coordinated. Fortunately, the leader was one of our faculty members also interested in integrating administration more directly with curriculum efforts. We decided that

the Project Director would attend the sessions on clinical supervision and teach the Stallings Classroom Observation Snapshot to the principals. It would also present guidelines for observations of writing and reading lessons. This would, hopefully, encourage principals to practice their clinical supervisions in those areas. This plan worked well and some of the principals did more actively observe and conference with teachers about their instructional strategies as a result.

By the end of the first year principal and teachers had learned a great deal about the writing process and were familiar with pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing. Teachers had used writing activities in their classrooms and had enabled children to conference with them about their writing ideas and to edit pieces with their peers. Writing folders reflected the growth children were experiencing in their writing and teachers had become free from their fears that every paper needed a thorough teacher editing for errors.

In his end of the year evaluation using the Levels of Use structured interview Dane Manis wrote,

> "One theme that came through strongly in the comments of teachers and principals at the end of the first year is that there existed a group of 12-15 individuals in the district who shared commitment to providing instruction in writing of the type promoted by the project. They felt they had made a good start and reported plans for continuing or even expanding. Still, along with their reports of enthusiasm and plans, there seemed to be a clear call for additional support for their efforts in the second year.

The second year of the project began much more smoothly than the first. We had established a good working relationship and could develop the process and our objectives for the second year together. In addition, both principals and teachers considered reading a priority area and were interested in learning all they could.

Our experiences throughout the year reinforced the value of being flexible when serving as change agents. We listened to input from the teachers and principals as we developed the workshops and explored ways to use the new-to-us Stallings SOI and Snapshot. We also adjusted our expectations for how long it would take to implement strategies we introduced and worked with the schools in adjusting to

individual teacher and school constraints. Finally, we found that our project was heavily influenced by external events - some unanticipated and all beyond our control.

The summer Institute gave us a good opportunity to determine the areas that we should expand on during the school application phase and which were of less priority to teachers. The most unexpected teacher reactions came near the end of the Institute when we brought in some recent books and suggested these would be good to read to children in the fall. Read orally? Many teachers were surprised that we were advocating oral reading. They had felt that spending time thus was considered wasteful by professionals and they had been adhering strictly to materials and skills in their basal programs although intuitively they had enjoyed such experiences in the past and knew children loved to hear teachers read to them. After this interchange we determined to introduce more recent books and demonstrate ways to expand oral reading and literary appreciation activities during the monthly workshops. Two additional areas that sparked teacher interest were the DR-TA and other interactive comprehension strategies and the integration of writing and reading. Skills instruction and remedial techniques received low priority; teachers were full of skills guidelines and sent remedial students to Title I classes.

We had not known what to expect from teachers regarding the Stallings classroom analysis. We had offered teachers this as a resource to help them understand better what happened during their instructional periods. When we introduced the concept of intrusions (interuptions, i.e., loudspeaker, visitor) commenting on how a high level of intrusions negatively influenced the learning in the classrooms we had many knowing comments in agreement. Teachers thought it would be good to be able to verify their irritations with data from the Stallings instrument. They were also interested in the concept of the interaction patterns and how they addressed their own communications. However, it took a good deal of suggesting on

our part to get six teachers to agree to having their classes profiled over three days. (When the data comes in their profile will provide us with a good base line data base for intermediate teachers.) The teachers were interested in the patterns that emerged from their analysis. Most helpful to these basically good teachers was the description of their frequently used interaction patterns. The teachers found this visualization of their own patterns a new way of looking at their instructional communication structures. We wondered together if more attention to these rules for interacting in the classrooms might be helpful where children are departmentalized and may have four to seven different teachers on a given day, all with different communication rules.

We also had mixed responses to our content, reading to learn, focus. Many of the teachers were in departmentalized settings and so did not teach subjects other than reading and language arts. They had not used much non-fiction and didn't place priority on the retention of new content. However, we did not want them to overlook this important area and so suggested and modeled reading to learn with non-fiction articles in magazines like RANGER RICK AND NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC WORLD. This idea proved a good introduction for several teachers to the possibility of using a variety of types of materials during their reading period. A few teachers did implement the 3 part reading to learn strategy in social studies and science and became convinced of the value of the approach.

The necessity of a process approach to implementing change with time and support for change behaviors was underscored as we helped teachers utilize group reading activities that model an interactive reading process. Our experiences with the DR-TA are illustrative. We introduced this interactive, prediction-based strategy during the summer Institute. We led a group DR-TA with participants and then explained how teachers could plan stories utilizing this technique. We then had teachers work in groups to develop and then execute their own DR-TA lessons. From their first experiences teachers liked it. However, this did not mean they would

begin to use the idea in their own teaching; most needed more encouragement. They asked us to model the technique in their classrooms, and we did. We spent more workshop time reviewing the process. Finally we issued an edict that the Intern would observe all teachers trying a DR-TA during November. Only with this strong mandate were some of the teachers ready to risk implementing a new technique.

As we continued to work with teachers in their classrooms on the strategy we again found how easily conflicts in classroom organization and our instructions undermined our efforts; we needed to help them find ways to adapt the strategy and make it work for them. Several of the teachers in departmentalized intermediate programs wanted to continue teaching to the whole group although we had cautioned against more than 12 students in any interactive, discussion group. For these teachers we developed a way to involve half of the class in writing out their responses to predictive questions while the teacher would work orally with the others.

Other teachers experimented with adaptation. Primary teachers liked reading to children. An intermediate used it for oral play reading. She helped students focus their attention and thinking by asking the predictive questions at appropriate stopping places while children read orally.

It took until spring before most of the teachers were using this strategy easily and adapting it. By that time some were so confident they were willing to do demonstrations in other classrooms and video-tape lessons for future projects. One principal became so convinced of its value that he conducted demonstrations in all non-project classrooms and has made it an objective for teachers this year. Another principal chose this as the focus for an in-service she coordinated in her building. However all weren't convinced as late as May. One principal came to me asking that I again explain the power of the DR-TA. He had just observed a first grade teacher using the strategy and couldn't believe how it excited and involved the children. The LOC questionnaire results profile this change during the year. (see Table I).

During the second year we also experienced several intrusions that affected the project. Such unexpected events always provide opportunities for learning, but they can also substantially thwart objectives and distort project effectiveness. We lived with both types of intrusions. Several enhanced our project efforts. The junior high principal wanted to have his reading staff included in the workshops - this added some strong well-informed reading teachers to the meetings who contributed many of the ideas they had found helpful in their teaching. It provided for the first time direct communication between the elementary buildings and the junior high and teachers appreciated learning more about each others' programs. By incorporating the administrative workshops into our project the principals had expanded their basic understanding of supervision and their leadership styles and were exploring new ways of exerting instructional leadership. Another positive addition to our schedule was our decision to attend the IRA convention in Chicago. Workshop time was spent preparing teachers and principals for the conference and for sharing learning afterwards. This experience was for most an exciting and confirming one - they heard talks by researchers they had learned about earlier and they took pride in what they knew and in being part of a much larger professional world. Taking advantage of these opportunities certainly strengthened the project.

Other events were less constructive and weakened our efforts. Midway through the year the superintendent was reported to be ready to leave for a better job. Almost immediately this diverted energies and left participants less eager to want to make changes in curriculum, particularly 2 institute more writing district-wide. A new person might come in soon and reorder priorities. Even later in the spring of the second year the administration, school board, and the teachers came to logger-heads over contract negotiations. This tense situation had very visible effect on the teachers. Even more debilitating was the news that a significant portion of the tax base for the district was being reclassified by court order. This caused the administration to table plans to continue the project for the third year, focusing on

math. Only late in the summer, due to strong teacher and principal interest was the project reinstated. Original plans to move ahead despite federal pullout of Basic Skills monies. Both enhancing and debilitating external influences must be accounted for in describing field-based projects.

By the end of just two years we felt a great deal had been accomplished. Principals and teachers knew a great deal more about writing and reading. They were teaching, relying more on what they knew instead of feeling totally dependent on a basal manual. As one veteran teacher put it in her interview with our evaluator,

> This project was like a shot in the arm. After teaching 20 years I needed to be stimulated to do new things. I had learned the DR-TA quite some time ago and then got away from it when we got a new reading series. I was spending so much time on just phonics and cueing systems that I lost sight of good stories. This year has brought me back to an interest in stories. Instead of ignoring our basal I began to look further to find additional stories by authors in our book. This was a real reawakening for me and my students love it. It helped me integrate and try things I didn't seem to have the energy to do on my own.

In summarizing the end of the year interviews with the principals the evaluator concluded that for at least three of the principals the reading in-service had given them confidence, information, and skills to go in and talk to teachers in ways they never had before.

EVALUATING THE PROJECT

Had we been able to develop an effective instructional leadership training model? Our own perceptions, imput from participants and others in the district and formative measures administered throughout the project all indicated that we are making an impact in the district. These impressions were also confirmed by the independent evaluation conducted by a trained CBAM evaluator using the Levels of Use interviews. The results of the LoU data for both years are reported in Table 2. Given the nature of the changes we had asked both teachers and principals to make these data certainly indicate the project objectives were being applied. The reasons for the lack of growth between the two years in project implementation is unclear. Perhaps during the second year the full sense of the possibilities for change were being internalized by the participants and they were more self-critical. The levels on the instrument include: Level 0 - non-use; Level 1 - orientation; Level 2 - preparation; Level 3 - mechanical; Level 4A - routine; Level 4B - refinement; Level 5 - integration; Level 6- renewal.

Was principals and teachers knowledge increased? Comparison of the pre and post test scores for participants each year indicated a substantial increase in their knowledge of the content we had targeted for the project. Table 3 contains the statistical analysis of results for the second year. We have included it because it illustrates the difference in changing basic knowledge of reading research and practices (Part 1) and in altering philosophy (Part 11). Participants learned a great deal more about reading, but when asked to rate statements about philosophy of reading the changes weren't as affected.

Did the principals expand their instructional leadership behaviors? Both our own observations and meetings with principals and the results of the LoU confirm that principals were in various ways implementing the project and using their knowledge and leadership skills. The additional leadership workshops

conducted during the school year had also affected their general leadership self-perceptions and those of their staffs. Data from the LEAD instrument are presented in Table 4. It can be observed that teachers in four of the five schools perceived their principals as more effective leaders on the post-test as compared to their perceptions of the pre-test. Only at one school was there virtually no change in the principals' effectiveness. The post-test mean scores for the principals ranged from 3.00 to 8.41. Possible effectiveness scores range from -24 to +24. Overall there as a significant improvement in the principals' effectiveness.

Did we improve the working climate in the schools? We have no way beyond our informal observations to answer this question. We learned that we could not use the TAWP/TARP in the way we had planned. It proved as sensitive to teachers changing perceptions of what ought to be as it was to their evaluations of what was in place in their schools. As we expanded their knowledge about what could be done in writing and reading instruction they wanted more. We plan to continue to work with this instrument, especially as a tool for formative evaluation for both teachers and principals.

Did the teachers implement theproject in their classrooms? Indications of teacher implementation came from three sources: observations in classroom,s especially the weekly Intern visits and reports, the LoU interviews and the SoC questionaires. All of these confirmed a high level of application of the project ideas and specific teaching strategies.

Did student achievement improve? The impact on student learning was difficult to measure since we did not devise new specific measures to assess the impact of the particular strategies we werek asking teachers to adopt. Results of the writing evaluations indicated that students did show more growth in writing than the non-project controls, but it was not statistically significant. The same trend was true of the reading evaluation.

WHAT ABOUT THE FUTURE?

Perhaps the best indication of the effectiveness of a project is what happens after federal or foundation dollars are removed. In our case this withdrawal was coupled with the loss of thousands of dollars to the school district because of the industrial tax-base decision and the contract negotiations in the district. Both principals and teachers had indicated that they very much wanted the project to continue, but we had to wait until late in the summer before the final decision was made - yes, the project would continue in math.

The project is also being implemented in one of the Chicago school districts. Both the superintendent and associate-superintendent are eager to provide a vehicle for their principals to grow as instructional leaders. The recent research on effective schools is being disseminated to school leaders and they are responding!

We plan to continue to refine the project model, especially in two areas. The principals' component needs to include a more careful initial diagnosis followed by adaptation of objectives to the particular district needs. In addition, we want to explore ways to encorporate more use of existing school personnel to maintain the momentum of the project innovations over time. As we work in additional settings over time we expect to have greater use of the Stallings SOI and the Snapshot. These instruments like the TAWP/TARP and the CBAM make the process of implementing change much easier.

The time seems right for school implementation projects. There is much good research that needs to be made available to practitioners so they can improve their efforts. Instruments and technology exist to make both current behaviors and change efforts concrete for practitioners and researchers. In addition, the tools are available to help us monitor the impact of our change attempts with principals and teachers. Most importantly, there are practitioners who want to learn and grow with us.

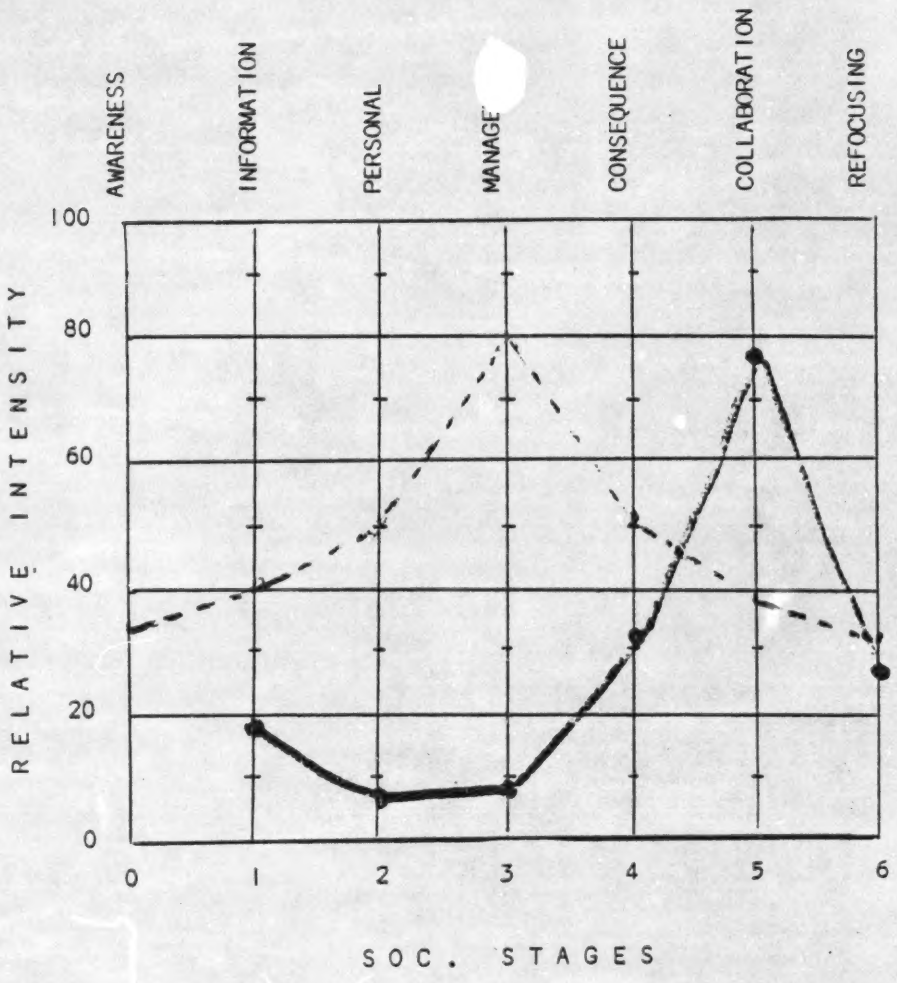

Table 1

October - - -

April ——

Table 2

LoU Ratings
Summary for the Writing Component

Teachers (N=13)

LoU Level[4]	Number	PerCent of Teachers Interviewed
III, Mechanical Use	2	15%
IV A, Routine Use	3	23%
IV B, Refinement	8	62%

Principals (N=3)

LoU Level	Number	PerCent of Principals Interviewed
IV B, Refinement	3	100%

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4 Level III, Mechanical Use: State in user focuses most effort on the short-term, day-to-day use of the innovation with little time for reflection. Changes in use are made more to meet user needs than client needs. The user is primarily engaged in a stepwise attempt to master the tasks required to use the innovation often resulting in disjointed and superficial use.

Level IV A, Routine Use: Use of the innovation is stabilized. Few if any changes are being made in ongoing use. Little preparation or thought is being given to improving innovation use or its consequences.

Level IV B, Refinement: State in which the user varies the use of the innovation to increase the impact on clients within immediate sphere of influence. Variations are based on knowledge of both short and long-term consequences for clients.

Table 2

LoU Rating
Summary for the Reading Component

Teachers (N=14)

LoU Level[4]	Number	PerCent of Teachers Interviewed
III, Mechanical Use	1	7%
IV A, Routine Use	5	30%
IV B, Refinement	8	57%

Principals (N=5)

LoU Level	Number	PerCent of Principals Interviewed
III, Mechanical Use	2	40%
IV A, Routine Use	1	20%
IV B, Refinement	2	40%

4 Level III, Mechanical Use: State in user focuses most effort on the short-term, day-to-day use of the innovation with little time for reflection. Changes in use are made more to meet user needs than client needs. The user is primarily engaged in a stepwise attempt to master the tasks required to use the innovation often resulting in disjointed and superficial use.

Level IV A, Routine Use: Use of the innovation is stabilized. Few if any changes are being made in ongoing use. Little preparation or thought is being given to improving innovation use or its consequences.

Level IV B, Refinement: State in which the user varies the use of the innovation to increase the impact on clients within immediate sphere of influence. Variations are based on knowledge of both short and long-term consequences for clients.

Table 3

Knowledge Questionnaire

Knowledge Questionnaire Section							
Section		I			II		
		pre	post	t	pre	post	t
Teachers	$\bar{x}$	40.67	71.27	10.97**	49.53	54.13	3.01**
N = 15	SD	8.73	6.36		5.04	3.14	
		pre	post	t	pre	post	t
Principals	$\bar{x}$	45.20	66.40	4.81**	49.80	52.00	2.15**
N = 5	SD	8.70	6.37		4.35	5.87	

** $p < .01$

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Table 4

Principal Effectiveness as Measured by the LEAD Instrument

School			A			B			C			D			E		
			pre	post	t	pre	post	t	pre	post	t	pre	post	t	pre	post	t
Teachers perceiving their own principals		$\bar{x}$	5.35	6.64	.71	5.39	8.41	1.89	2.79	4.30	1.06	1.38	6.12	2.02	3.06	3.00	-.03
		SD	5.21	4.75		6.37	6.41		5.70	4.86		5.19	7.91		8.03	4.84	
			N = 30			N = 44			N = 55			N = 32			N = 30		
			pre	post		pre	post		pre	post		pre	post		pre	post	
Principals perceiving themselves	score		11	13		5	21		9	15		8	5		6	17	